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We want to applaud U.S. Representative Mark Kirk for his leadership in reauthorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). For over 10 years, SCHIP has provided children and their families with access to high quality, affordable health care; in Illinois last year over 175,000 children received health care due to SCHIP. We know that when children have access to quality health care, the benefits go beyond their physical health; it also increases their likelihood of academic achievement and other future successes.

As the economy continues to weaken and families face job losses, we must protect children's health and stability. We are proud of our state's commitment to strengthening Illinois children's access to quality health care. With Mark Kirk's support, we will continue to build on the progress we have made to ensure our children can lead healthy lives.

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